

WHAT IS PERFECT LOVE?

Most of us want to know with certainty that our home in heaven is secure. The apostle John tells us how we can enter into eternity with confidence: *“Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world”* (1 John 4.17). I can stand before God in judgment with boldness when love has been perfected in my life.

What does it mean to have perfect love? If you back up a few verses, perfect love is defined as loving one another. 1 John 4.12 explains that *“if we love one another...His love has been perfected in us.”* Then you come down to verse 16 where we are told that *“the one who abides in love abides in God and God in him”* (1 John 4.16). I have a relationship with God when I have a love for others.

That thought leads to the next verse which tells us that love has been perfected among us. My love is perfected when I love my fellow man. And when I have love for my fellow man, then I can have boldness in the day of judgment. Why? *“because as He is, so are we in the world”* (1 John 4.17). In other words, I am showing love the same way that God shows love (cf. Eph. 5.1,2)

This same thought is found in Matthew 5.44-48. This passage tells us to love our enemies (Matt. 5.44-47). If we love everyone regardless of what they do to us, then *“you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect”* (Matt. 5.48). Not perfect in reference to sinlessness. This is a perfection in reference to the way we love. We have perfect love just as God loves.

1 John 4 continues by putting this boldness in contrast to the fear of judgment. If I have perfect love in that I love as God loves, then I will not have to fear the day of judgment. That is because *“there is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear”* (1 John 4.18). My love for others casts out my fear of judgment. In contrast, if I am fearful of the day of judgment, that indicates that I have *“not been made perfect in love”* (1 John 4.19). Perhaps I am afraid of talking to Jesus about my life because I have not been showing love the way God shows love. Perfect love, loving as God loves, will allow us to look forward to judgment day with confidence. CLP

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“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature”
-Mark 16.15

July 3, 2022

MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS : 9:00 AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP: 9:50 AM
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP: 6:00 PM
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS 7:30 PM

DOES THE BLOOD OF JESUS GO BACKWARDS?

The coming of Christ and the blessing of salvation that comes through His shed blood had been anticipated for thousands of years. Peter tells us that *“of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully”* and that salvation was that *“which angels desired to look into.”* (1 Pet. 1.10-12). The blessing of forgiveness is beyond description. In reference to forgiveness from the grace of God through Jesus, Paul wrote, *“Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift”* (1 Cor. 9.15).

The question is often asked, “What about those who died before Jesus came and offered forgiveness through His shed blood?” In Hebrews 9.15, Jesus is described as *“the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant.”* One could be considered just and righteous under the first covenant. David was a man after God’s own heart who was forgiven from his sins (Ps. 32.5). Abraham was righteous because of his faith (Rom. 4.3). Yet, they still needed to be cleansed by the blood of Jesus.

No one is without sin (Rom. 3.23). But those who were forgiven in the past were forgiven in anticipation of the blood of Jesus. When His blood was shed, it worked backwards to all who had the promise of forgiveness. CLP

WHY WE NEED GRACE

PSALM 51:1,2

INTRODUCTION:

1. We ought to be amazed by the grace of God which saves us though we are wretched. (Rom. 7.24; Eph. 2.8)
2. In a beautiful psalm, David reminds us of the guilt of sin and why we need the amazing grace of God.

I. WHAT IS SIN?

- A. Violating the will of God is transgression.
 1. **PSALM 51.1:** *“According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions.”* (vs. 3,13)
 2. Transgression is the opposite of being *“willing and obedient”* (Isa. 1.19,20).
- B. Violating the will of God is iniquity.
 1. **PSALM 51.2:** *“Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity”*
 2. Iniquity is the *“pollutions of the world”* (2 Pet. 2.20).
 3. To return to the world is like a *“sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire”* (2 Pet. 2.22).
- C. Violating the will of God is sin.
 1. **PSALM 51.2:** *“And cleanse me from my sin.”* (vs. 3-5,9)
 2. Sin is missing the mark either by falling short, overshooting, to the right, or to the left. (cf. James 4.17)

II. WHAT DOES SIN DO?

- A. Sin will defile me.
 1. **PSALM 51.2FF:** *“Wash me...cleanse me...purge me.”*
 2. This was written contextually as David felt remorse over his sin with Bathsheba. (2 Sam. 11.3,27)
 3. No amount of soap can cleanse our sins. (Jer. 2.22,23)
- B. Sin will destroy me.
 1. **PSALM 51.8,17:** *“bones You have broken...broken spirit ...broken and a contrite heart.”*
 2. Peter describes sin as destructive. (2 Pet. 2.1-3)
- C. Sin will condemn me.
 1. **PSALM 51.11:** *“Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.”*
 2. I am sent away from the presence of God. (2 Thess. 1.8,9)

CONCLUSION: Though hopeless, all hope is not lost!

“GATHERED TO HIS PEOPLE”

The inspired text records the last moments of Abraham’s life at the age of one hundred and seventy five years. *“Then Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people”* (Gen. 25.8).

The phrase, *“gathered to his people,”* reassures us of the life that is waiting for those who step into eternity. It is common for those who have passed away to be buried along side their family who had preceded them in death. In the Taft cemetery, I have several family members who have been laid to rest including my grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. But that is not the meaning of the phrase, *“gathered to his people.”* Abraham was not being buried along side those who had gone on before him. After Abraham breathed his last, he would join his brethren in eternity.

Jacob’s last wishes were to have his sons bury him with his fathers. He tells his sons, *“I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers”* (Gen. 49.29). After he spoke his last words, it says that *“he drew his feet up into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people”* (Gen. 49.33). Notice that he had not yet been buried. His sons wept over his now vacant body. Yet it says that Jacob was *“gathered to his people.”* Before his sons placed him in a cave with his fathers, Jacob was already with his fathers in paradise.

We have lost too many. There have been too many goodbyes, too many tears, too many broken hearts. But we can take solace in knowing that those who *“sleep in Jesus”* (1 Thess. 4.14), are not alone, but are with those who have gone on before them. Did Roger greet Billy when he arrived? Did Ann give him the grand tour of paradise? Is he catching Lu up on what has happened these last few years?

David had to do what no parent should ever have to do. He buried his child. But David was able to move on with hope in his heart. Why? David said, *“I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me”* (2 Sam. 12.23). David knew that someday, in the realm of eternity, he would be able to gaze upon his little boy once again. We will never see our loved ones again on this side of eternity. They shall not return to us. But there will come a day when we will go to them. On the other side of eternity, we will join our loved ones in a loving embrace and rejoice knowing that together, *“we shall always be with the Lord”* (1 Thess. 4.17).

CLP